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## DEFINITION OF A SOCIAL POLICY RELATING TO THE DEPENDENT GROUP.<sup>1</sup>

THE subject of the social treatment of dependents has been approached through several different disciplines, according to the previous training and bias of the investigator and writer. The economists have dealt with the topic as a problem of finance, of public expenditure, and of production, wages, and the distribution of the product of industry. Since the money spent in public relief must be raised by taxation, and since the method of giving relief affects the efficiency of labor and the rate of wages, the economists were right in giving serious attention to this matter.<sup>2</sup> The Poor Law has naturally been treated by legal writers, because it was a vital part of the system of control by governments in all modern countries, especially in northern Europe and the English colonies and their offspring. The "police power" of the state covers this function.<sup>3</sup>

The older "moral philosophy" or "moral science" sought to answer the question: "What is our duty to the very poor, and how can we best fulfil that duty?" In reality, that is one problem of what may be called a branch of social science, differentiated as "social technology."<sup>4</sup> For the steps that we take in accumulating facts about the Dependent Group—in the classification of subgroups, in the determination of causes, in the statistical measurement of misery, and in the definition of social aims—all culminate and find their supreme value in their contribution to the solution of this question: "What is our *duty* to the helpless poor and how may we best fulfil that duty?"

<sup>1</sup> Read at the Congress of Arts and Science, St. Louis, September 23, 1904. American conditions were chiefly considered in this paper.

<sup>2</sup> Here may be mentioned, among many, Malthus, Chalmers, J. S. Mill, Fawcett, Roscher.

<sup>3</sup> See E. FREUND, *Police Power*, 1904.

<sup>4</sup> My article, *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY*, January, 1901.

When we come to deal with special classes of dependents, we encounter a series of professional disciplines and arts. For example, the care of the insane is a branch of the medical art, and only alienists who devote their lives to this department are trusted to speak with highest authority. This is also true of the public care of epileptics. The care of the feeble-minded, idiots, and imbeciles is chiefly a matter of a pedagogical specialty, although medicine and surgery lend important aid, as in physical culture, the thyroid treatment, etc. The care of normal dependent children is best determined by considerations of general education, and here we are brought into the field of the teacher and to the problems of domestic institutions.

It thus appears that the study of the social treatment of dependents makes drafts on almost all the funds of human knowledge, uses all the methods and results of investigation, and employs in turn all the great institutional agencies of the community.

This essay does not profess to announce for the first time any new discoveries or results of special original investigations as yet unpublished, but rather to mark the present stage of knowledge on the matter before us, and to indicate some of the points on the frontier of experiment and research where further data are needed. If, in thus restating the subject, some slight increment to science may be added, it will be incidental to the main purpose of the exposition.

Any attempt to describe even the system of charity in one country would result in a dry, tedious, and disappointing sketch. The essential features of modern methods fill a large volume, and detailed accounts require many volumes.<sup>5</sup>

It would seem expedient to select a theme which will lead us to consider the most recent and successful endeavor of students of social science, (1) to construct a special discipline which is clearly marked off by its subject-matter and is deserving of independent and systematic treatment; and (2) to consider a method of taking up particular problems of practice, so as to guide experiment into the most economical and promising paths.

<sup>5</sup> *Modern Charity Systems*, by the writer and others (The Macmillan Co., 1904).

## I.

A social policy is not aimless and irrational, but *moves toward an end, seeks to realize a good*. Soon or late, social science, in the course of its development and specialization, must encounter the problem of values and standards which does not complicate the studies of inorganic nature, as chemistry, physics, and astronomy, and only incidentally biology. Thus, for example, we are forming judgments as to the best methods of dealing with dependents. What do we mean by "best"? We are really thinking of the welfare of dependents and of the people of the community of which they are members. Many specific ends we have in mind; as the restoration of the sick and the insane to health, or the mitigation of distress when cure is impossible; the improvement of the touch, hearing, sight, and skill of the feeble-minded; the proper nutrition and development of neglected infants; peaceful and quiet existence for aged men and women in almshouses; and many more such purposes. We give social honor and praise to the rich men who endow hospitals, and to the physicians and nurses who faithfully give their lives to the sick. It is evident that modern societies act as if they knew that such ends are rational and worthy.

But there is both theoretical and practical interest in the wider scientific problem: What is the general social end? For we neither know the full extent of social obligation, nor the relative value of a particular object or institution, until we see the specific action in its place in a comprehensive system of ends. Our theory is incomplete and our system of agencies falls short, and our devices are either superfluous and exaggerated, or halting and inadequate, until our definition of the ultimate purpose of social action and conduct is clear and rationally justified.<sup>6</sup>

Since we cannot, here at least, critically follow this argument to a satisfactory conclusion, we may assume what society actually takes for granted, and what we find implied in all social institutions, laws, societies, movements, governments—that health, sanity, intelligence, morality, beauty, etc., are desirable for every human being.

<sup>6</sup> See STAMMLER, *Wirtschaft und Recht*.

The standard by which we judge a social policy must be a *multiple* standard, like the compensating pendulum of a reliable clock. The standard here assumed as valid includes the following ideas: (1) Welfare, well-being — analyzed into its various unanalyzable elements of health, wealth, knowledge, beauty, sociability, ethical rightness, and religious faith — is the most general conception involved (analysis of A. W. Small). (2) The welfare of all men, not of a limited class, must be the ideal, the regulative principle. Neither the political will of a democratic age nor the authority of an ethical philosophy countenances any standard for social conduct which is not universal, purely human. Persons cannot ethically be treated as means to ends outside themselves. No policy which is partial to a family, a dynasty, an order, a church, a class, at the expense of others, can be defended. (3) Therefore our standard is set up for the defense of the helpless child, the undeveloped, the tardy, the incapable; not because of what they can now do for society, but because they are human and have potential capacity for future development. (4) The analysis of social ends shows that we include all qualities and kinds of the humanly desirable. As a nature-object every person must have a certain minimum of food and shelter, and, normally, the race-interest asks for provision for propagation, maintenance, and protection of healthy offspring. Hence the demand of our standard that all capable human beings have a chance to work and produce wealth, material objects of desire. As a psychical person, one who must find his own way in a knowable world, each human being must be taught what he can learn of the knowledge possessed by his community, and his power to learn must be developed. Culture must be many-sided, even in an asylum for idiots or a prison for the criminal. (5) Scientific social ethics transcends merely qualitative analysis of social elements of welfare, and is ambitious to employ mathematics as far as possible in the accurate and quantitative measurement of its standard. Our age is *trying to define at least a minimum standard of life for all citizens*. This process has already gone farther than many citizens are aware. The *standardizing* of weights and measures is a recent addition to the functions and offices of our federal government at Washington, and it marks an

advance in the technical arts. At many points<sup>7</sup> we are seeking to standardize the conditions of welfare of human beings. Naturally we are here concerned with a *minimum* standard; if we can discover and fix this measure, the more capable, aspiring, and energetic members of society may safely be left free to enjoy all above that level which they can justly acquire and rationally use.

At this hour no rational (scientific) standard for the minimum income of wage-earners has been generally accepted. (1) The rough rule of average employers is "the law of supply and demand;" which law actually leads to the destruction of human life on a gigantic scale for the sake of profits. It has no final social justification. (2) The gradation of wages according to the rate of profits is not rational or equitable. The fluctuations and inequalities under such a rule would be unendurable.<sup>8</sup> (3) The rule of the "sliding scale," which means that the rate of wages fluctuates with the price of the commodity produced, has no ultimate basis in reason, and does not provide a socially acceptable minimum rate. (4) The rule of the strongest, in the fight between trade unions and employers' combinations, which gives the advantage to the party which holds out longest, is simply a barbarous makeshift, with a rational standard far in the dim background. And where unions and combinations do agree the result is simply more hardship for the consumers, and bears with greatest weight on the very poor. (5) *The only rational starting-point is a minimum standard below which public morality—expressed in sentiment, custom, trade-union regulations, moral maxims, and law—will not permit workers to be employed for wages.*

As I have elsewhere discussed this minimum in relation to the Industrial Group, it remains only to indicate the contribution which charity work has made to the discussion of a standard. The dietaries of asylums, orphanages, hospitals, and prisons are the outcome of a long series of experiments in chemical and physiological laboratories, in army and navy, in camp and mine, as well as in these institutions of charity and correction.

<sup>7</sup> See C. R. HENDERSON, *Practical Sociology in the Service of Social Ethics*.  
"Decennial Publications of the University of Chicago," 1902.

<sup>8</sup> *The Outlook*, August, 1904, article by Messrs. Hand and Poole.

One field for the adoption of a standardized minimum remains to be cultivated — that of adequate outdoor relief to needy families in their homes. The stupid complacency with which only too many public officials and private benevolent societies pretend to relieve the destitute, while leaving many of them still partly to depend on begging, theft, or vice, is a sad commentary on the state of knowledge in this region. One result of this unscientific guesswork, where measurement is already possible, is that much public money is spent on the burial of pauper children which should have gone to feed and nourish them into vigorous producers of wealth.

Charity, in American cities, is far behind its task. It does not even have knowledge of those who need its aid. Under the "Elberfeld system" there are friends of the dependent in every small district of the city, and the individuals on the border of suffering can easily find their way to a helper. In America the public funds are frequently accessible only in one central office, and even when there is outdoor relief it is limited in amount.

There are many people in comfortable circumstances, and many charity workers, who think that our American charity is very nearly adequate. This optimism, I believe, is not based on facts, and is positively a barrier to necessary improvements. My own conviction is based on long personal observation and on certain professional testimonies and statistical data. For example: Physicians who practice among the poor frequently report sickness and mortality which arise from "starvation diseases." Teachers of public schools in poor quarters make similar statements. The London and Chicago measurements of children in reformatory schools show an enormous ratio of dwarfed, underfed children. The reports of boards of health in American cities contain evidence of the same conditions.

A very common answer of some charity societies to this charge is that they are able to give relief to all applicants. But, with these facts before us, the answer is not decisive. People by the tens of thousands are trying to exist and bring up children in homes which are unfit for human habitation, and on food which is insufficient to meet the minimum requirements of growth. They do this because they either do not know

where to apply for help, or because they know that, unless actually ready to perish, they will be treated as able-bodied and "not needing relief," or because they prefer to suffer from hunger and cold and disease rather than ask alms.

I do not claim that charity should attempt to relieve all distress. No doubt the idleness and vices of men produce much misery which philanthropy cannot reach. No doubt moral reformation and schemes of thrift, insurance, education, and general sanitation will in time remove many of the causes of this distress. But what I urge is that we do not now realize the actual enormity of suffering from poverty, that our methods of finding out are very inadequate, and that our optimism is as cruel as it is unscientific. So long as many influential charity workers are teaching rich and well-to-do people that we are almost at our goal we shall never awaken the public to put forth the necessary effort to cope with the overwhelming evils of extreme need in our industrial centers.<sup>9</sup>

The present efforts of the permanent census bureau of the nation, supported by the National Conference of Charities and Correction, by the National Prison Association, and by all experts, to collect continuous and reliable statistics relating to paupers and criminals should be supported by all citizens. It is to be hoped that funds will be furnished to professors and students in university departments of social science for investigations in this field.

It might be thought that the elements of welfare in the higher regions of intellectual, æsthetic, and moral culture are too refined, indefinite, and ethereal to be standardized. But all countries which have compulsory school attendance, at least up to a certain age, declare thereby that they have adopted a minimum standard of education; and they compel competitive exploitation of youth

<sup>9</sup> One illustration of an attempt to fix a minimum standard may here be given: "Dr. Frankel, of the United Hebrew Charities of New York, in a study of income and expenditure of a family just above the line of dependency, shows the disbursements for one month to have been about \$32, the receipts from all sources (including \$5 from lodgers) during the same period were from \$33 to \$35." — SOLOMON C. LÖWENSTEIN, in *Jewish Charity*, June, 1904, p. 210. See also CHARLES BOOTH, *Life and Labour*; ROUNTREE, *Poverty: a Study of Town Life*; E. T. DEVINE, *Principles of Relief*. Dr. Devine's book was not yet published when this paper was written.



to wait for maturity of body and mind. Child-labor laws are themselves the definite legal expression of a mathematical measurement of a social duty.

The trade-union world is stating its minimum standard more and more definitely, and insisting on it with courage and constancy, though sometimes also with acts of lawlessness and atrocity which show disregard of community welfare. This minimum standard includes such factors as the eight-hour day, the sanitary workplace, protected machinery, the age of beginning apprenticeship, and a minimum rate of wages for each branch of industry. The effect of the successful and general application of this standard upon the incapable and the feeble deserves our attention; but the enforcement of the minimum, being a community interest, should not be left to trade unions, but should be, as far as possible, a matter of law and governmental action.

In the maintenance of this minimum standard we are compelled to face the problem of immigration of foreigners whose standard of living is below this minimum. So long as hordes of this class are permitted to come freely to America, to live herded in unfit habitations, and to compete for places with our naturalized citizens who have already won an advance, the case is hopeless for our own people.

Uncritical and traditional requirements of ethics produce an unreasoning sentimentalism which wreaks injury upon the race. The ethical demands of the future will become more exact, more capable of explanation and justification, because they will rest both upon inherited instincts of sympathy and also upon calculations of the consequences of methods on social welfare in our own and coming ages. Many of the moral standards of our times need to be profoundly modified by this process of scientific testing and experimentation.

## II.

The general form of our present problem is this: What is the best system and method of promoting the welfare of the Dependent Group, considered as a vital part of the entire community? It is chiefly a problem of technique. This technique is a mode of

action by a community. It is known and has its reasons in relation to the rational order of society. It can be taught and learned, for it is taught and learned. Hence it is a subject of science and has won proper recognition as a topic in this Scientific Congress. This technique is learned originally as other scientific conclusions are reached — by systematic observation of social phenomena, by induction from facts, by performing experiments with methods under varied conditions, by inventing working hypotheses and putting them to the test of reality.

We are students of causes in a rational system of life; only we are trying to discover forces and conditions which will bring about a desired result, and we are not merely trying to explain a fact completed. We set before us not merely an effect to be accounted for, but a state of society and of persons which we desire and will to produce, on the ground that we represent it to ourselves as desirable. We are mentally adjusting a system of means to good ends, and not merely looking for the process by which what actually exists once came to be. One of these processes is just as truly scientific as the other, although the difficulty of prevision and provision is greater than that of explaining the past.

### III.

#### ELEMENTS IN A SOCIAL POLICY RELATING TO THE DEPENDENT GROUP.

I. We need to *distinguish* as sharply as possible, both in social thought and action, the members of this group from those who belong to the Industrial Group. Perhaps one of the most disastrous forms of mental confusion is that of confounding these two groups and so treating them alike. The dependents have long been played off against the wage-earners, and are even now frequently used to lower the standard of living of the competent so as to reduce many of the self-supporting to beggary, shame, and demoralization, with a long train of vicious consequences through heredity for the future race. The typical historical example here is the national degradation which threatened the English people before the reform of the poor law about 1834, when poor relief

was given as a supplement to wages, with the consequence that all common, unskilled laborers were fast becoming paupers as a condition of mere existence; and pauper labor proved to be incapable of producing wealth enough to support the nation.

But we do not have to go so far to discover flagrant illustrations of the same tendency, even in the fortunate economic conditions of the United States. There has not been an important strike in the past decennium, involving large numbers of low-skilled laborers, when charity-supported or charity-assisted persons or semi-criminals did not offer themselves in crowds to compete with the strikers.<sup>10</sup> The "parasitic industries" are found in all cities, that is, industries in which the income which supports the family comes partly from wages, partly from charity, partly from vice, and partly from the physical and moral capital of the next generation.

Under a previous head the minimum standard of human existence has been defined as closely as the nature of the subject and our present knowledge permit. The critical test lies here: those who can earn the minimum in competitive society belong to the Industrial Group; those who cannot earn this minimum belong to the Dependent Group. This is a rough measure, but it is far better than no standard, and it is practically correct. In fact, it is already more or less consciously applied in every instance when public poor relief is given. Of course, no thoughtful person will take us to mean that there is an impassable barrier between the two classes, so that dependents cannot be helped to ascend into and remain in the Industrial Group; and there will always be some difficulty to decide the status of those on the border line.

The members of the Dependent Group, who cannot earn even the minimum wage necessary to a human existence, are now actually supported by society; but frequently, and on a large scale, in such a way and by such methods as to keep them down and drag others to their level. For example, the products of charitable and correctional institutions are sometimes put upon the market in such quantities and massed at such points as to

<sup>10</sup> It is notorious that many of the professional "strike-breakers" are of the vagrant class, on the borderland between vice, pauperism, and crime.

reduce the wages of self-supporting work-people below the level of the minimum. In the sewing industries very serious evil is thus introduced.

2. A social policy relating to the Dependent Group must isolate the Criminal Group. One of the plagues of public and private charity is the anti-social criminal, the sturdy rogue and vagrant, the debased drunkard, the cunning thief, who mix in the throng of the merely dependent and appropriate by impudence or craft the fund intended for the helpless and incapable. At the door and desk of the municipal lodging-house may be seen daily the sifting and judging process—one of the most delicate and difficult tasks which ever test the judicial faculties of man. The same problem often confronts the friendly visitor in the homes of the poor; as when one is called to help the wife and infant children of a lazy or absconding husband and father.

Recent experiments and discussions at this dividing line have shown that the rough and ready, but overworked, "work test," even as a "workhouse test," is but one factor in the best method. One difficulty is that the motley multitude called the "unemployed" is composed of unlike elements—the vagrant, the inebriate, the petty unsuccessful thief, the burglar "down in his luck," the physical degenerate, the enfeebled convalescent just staggering back from a hospital, the stranded country youth, the unskilled laborer seeking a job without trade-union card, and others; some with hard palms and thick muscles, some with deft but delicate fingers, some accustomed to cold and heat, some with prophetic cough ready to perish with slight exposure to sun or storm.

In order to treat with fairness, discrimination, wisdom, and humanity all these "Unemployed," and to transfer to the machinery of the criminal law those with whom charity cannot deal, several tests are necessary, and a merely automatic, mechanical method is totally irrational. (a) First of all a judicious, firm, courageous, and humane agent is necessary. The evil of depending entirely on a single coarse test, as the stone pile, the bath, the workhouse, is that it seems to make the man unnecessary. It has long been observed that in an asylum for the insane where all the patients are kept within steel cages, one or two brutal attendants

can carry out the policy; but where freedom, fresh air, play, industry, and rational treatment are given, the hospital must have many gentle, strong, and trained nurses. So exclusive reliance on a stone-breaking test tends to place surly and cruel keepers in charge of all applicants for shelter and aid; and thus the institution designed for charity and justice becomes an insult to honest workmen and a discouragement to the sensitive, without furnishing the quick insight which most unerringly discovers real criminals. (b) The work test, in many forms, is only one useful method which works well under good direction, since crime is as parasitic as pauperism, and the mark of the parasite is that he wishes to live at the expense of others. (c) The employment bureau, with a reliable record and a sharp watchcare, is another means of marking the industrious man and discovering the cheat. (d) In cities, and often in towns, a certain amount of personal guardianship, a kind of probation work, is necessary to hold a moral weakling back from sliding down the easy incline toward criminality. All this information which is necessary for a wise treatment must be collected instantly, by means of messengers and telephone and telegraph, and from every available source. For the moment when a man can be helped and turned away from beggary or crime is the moment when he is under treatment and within the grasp of the official. The German *Verpflegungsstationen*, with their simple inns and their system of certificates and records, have much to teach us.

But whatever the tests employed, in some way the members of the Criminal Group must be distinguished, known, and isolated from the Dependent Group. Charity, public or private, has no machinery of compulsion, and ought not to have. The steamboat is not made to sail on land; the schoolhouse is not constructed to hold burglars in confinement; and a charity bureau is not fitted for the task of managing deserting husbands, petty thieves, and confirmed inebriates. Society must erect specially adapted machinery for dealing with this class of men, and it must have agents trained for each particular branch of its service.

3. Part of our social policy must be a *better understanding between the public and private agencies of relief*. So far as

principles of administrative methods are concerned, there are no radical differences; both must aim at the real good of the recipients and of the community. It is also true that the division of labor need not be the same in every state and every county or municipality.

But the necessity of agreement and co-operation is easily illustrated and demonstrated from examples taken from practice. Thus private charity sometimes supports a feeble alien who has been rejected by the agent of public outdoor relief until he has gained the rights of settlement and becomes henceforth a public charge; and this happens even in states where it is a punishable offense to import a pauper from one county into another. This understanding should go far enough, in cities where there is legal outdoor relief, to secure for the salaried agents the assistance of voluntary, unpaid, friendly visitors. Our public relief in American cities sins against the fundamental principle of individual treatment, because it refuses thus far to learn from the German cities which employ unpaid visitors and give to them, within certain regulated limits, the responsibility for the distribution of public funds.

The essential principles of division of labor seem to be: (1) the relief which is required by law is only that which is necessary to life and industrial efficiency, while private relief can deal with exceptional cases and provide a measure of comfort; (2) public relief is more suitable where there can be common, general regulations; private relief is more adaptable and can act in exceptional ways; (3) public relief may properly provide for permanent and universal demands; private relief, being optional and voluntary, may rise to meet changing situations, and hence can more readily try experiments for which the voting public is not ready to expend money or erect administrative machinery.

But division of labor is only one aspect of social co-operation, and it really implies and demands a conscious and concerted effort to work for the common welfare. This division of labor and this co-operation require organs and agents to make them effective. In German cities the initiative is naturally taken by the munici-

pality; in American cities it must at first be taken by the Charity Organization Society or some kindred association.

4. A social policy relating to the Dependent Group must include an extension of experiments with positive social selection. Each year competent thinkers come nearer to agreement on this principle, although it is not so clear that we have yet hit upon the most effective devices in its application. It is more than formerly assumed that persons who cannot improve, or at least will not degrade, the physical and psychical average of the race, should be prevented, so far as possible, from propagating their kind. Accidental and sporadic deflections downward from the average would still occur; but one of the principal causes of race-deterioration would cease at the source.

The device of extermination by painless death has not been seriously discussed among the competent.

The device of *sterilization* has been frequently suggested, and, in a few instances, chiefly on the ground of advantage to the individual, it has been employed. There is nothing absurd, cruel, or impracticable in this proposition, although it would be helpful only within a limited area at best, and would not make segregation unnecessary, since even a sterilized degenerate can do injury by example and actions. It could be useful only upon the recommendation of a medical administrator and in the case of persons isolated from social contacts.

A beginning has been made with the device of the custodial colony for segregation, already in quite general use with the insane, the feeble-minded, the epileptic. The idea is not absolutely new, but the scientific grounds and economic methods have not yet been worked out in a way to frame a cogent argument and appeal to electors and legislators. We must still interpret the partial and tentative experiments already made so as to throw light on extended applications of the principle. Until the entire community, or at least the governing majority, has accepted this policy with open eyes and united will, we must expect to pay the heavy costs of neglect.

Conviction of the importance of a rational and humane policy of social selection has been diluted, and aggressive effort has been

delayed, by certain widely accepted errors. Thus we have a large number of citizens who cling to the belief that "natural selection" is adequate and preferable. They speak of the "evanescence of evil;" they cite the high rate of mortality of starved and sickly infants; the sterility of prostitutes; the frequent celibacy of vicious and criminal men; the disappearance of degenerate families; the ravages of alcoholism and disease among the neurotic and inefficient. Doubtless, as was long ago abundantly illustrated by Malthus, misery, pain, weakness, vice, do tend to extinction without any conscious, concerted, and rational effort of the community through law. Why not leave the weeding-out process to these destructive agents and forces?

False modesty has been an important factor in hindering the calm and reasonable discussion of the selective process. Ignorance of biological science has contributed to the obstacles in the way of progress. We need to consider what the waiting, *laissez-faire* policy involves in order to understand why a humane society will not always stand by without a positive effort to modify the process and reduce its cost. It would mean, first of all, that hundreds of thousands of our fellow-men who fail in competition would starve or freeze before our eyes in our streets. Among these would be innumerable innocent little children, and helpless old men and women, unfortunate and crippled veterans of the army of labor. We do not need to depend on imagination for a knowledge of the effect of such conduct. It is what Bill Sykes did, what miserly stepfathers and heartless tyrants have done. The king who heard that his subjects had nothing to eat, and sent word that they were welcome to eat grass, was inviting a revolution—and it came. Hunger breeds despair, and those who are left on the verge of starvation have nothing to risk when they steal and rob, or set the torch to palaces, and rob public stores and granaries in the glare of conflagrations.

The instinct of sympathy is too deep and general to permit neglect. The moral obligation of charity is now with us organic, institutional, and fortified by ethical philosophy. While we cannot "prove" it, as we can a physical cause of disease, we can show to all who are capable of appreciating the argument that charity



is an essential factor in a rational view of life and the universe. In spite of the powerful and influential protest of Mr. Herbert Spencer, the civilized nations have gone on their way of extending the positive agencies of benevolence. The let-alone policy is impracticable. Evidence is accumulating to prove that charitable support without a positive general policy of segregation and custody is, in the case of those who are seriously defective, the certain cause of actually increasing misery by insuring the propagation of the miserable. We cannot go backward to mere natural selection, the process which was suitable with vegetable and animal life, and inevitable in the stages of early human culture. Nor can we rest with merely mitigating methods of relief. We are compelled to consider devices for direct elimination of the heredity of pauperism and grave defect.

Fortunately we have already discovered that an effective colony method is technically and economically possible, humane, and financially advisable. For example, it is not difficult to estimate the average cost per year for the support of a feeble-minded woman of child-bearing age in a farm colony where all the inhabitants work, learn, play, but none breed. If she were free to roam, the county or state would have during these same years to support the woman and her defective illegitimate children. The future generations of "the Jukes family" are in sight, and the burdens they will bring. We know the effects of these two policies; they "spring to the eyes." The method of segregation, as a device of negative social selection, is already at work and its results are before us. Gradually, tentatively, carefully, the method will be employed with others, as they are found to be manifestly unfit for the function of propagation and education of offspring: from the insane and feeble-minded society will proceed to place in permanent custody the incurable inebriate, the professional criminal, the hopelessly depraved. The marriage of consumptives, and of others with feeble constitutions, will be increasingly diminished under pressure of enlightened public opinion.

But the policy of segregation is applicable only within rigid limitations. Only those members can be cut off from family life and social freedom who are manifestly unfit for parenthood and

for contact with fellow-citizens in competitive industry. Many of the children of criminals may be so nourished and taught in a new domestic environment as to become valuable citizens. But society cannot afford to play the nurse and teacher for a very large horde of incapables and criminals. The cost would be too great and the sacrifice would fall on the wrong parties. It is in the improvements and reforms which promise the elevation of the group not yet either pauper or criminal that we may most reasonably hope to secure the best returns for our efforts. Something may be done to compel parents now negligent to perform their duties as parents and make better use of their wasted resources. The extension of probation work to parents, already begun in some of our juvenile courts, is a hint of what may be done.

5. Not even a brief outline of a social policy relating to the Dependent Group can omit reference to the agencies of "preventive and constructive" philanthropy. Omitting details, yet bearing in mind the impressive array of inventions in this line, let us seek to define the essential regulative principles which at once inspire and direct these methods.

Pauperism is, in great part, the effect of known and removable causes. These causes are not obscure, concealed, or beyond our grasp. They are consequences of human choices which may be reversed. The reception of alms, even in cases of innocent misfortune, is a social injury; it lowers self-respect, weakens energy, produces humiliation and mental suffering, diminishes productive efficiency, tends to the increase of pauperism. Hence those who know most of relief are most desirous of reducing the necessity for it to the lowest possible terms.

The National Consumers' League and the recently organized National Child Labor Committee represent a policy of prevention which is full of promise. It is perfectly clear to all competent observers, who are not blinded by some false conceptions of personal financial interest, that the vitality, industrial efficiency, fitness for parenthood, and intelligent social co-operation of the rising generation are profoundly affected by neglect of the children of the poor. In order to prevent juvenile pauperism and youthful vice and crime, the entire nation must work steadily to

introduce and make operative something like the following program of legislation and administration:<sup>11</sup>

All children must complete the first eight years of the common school curriculum and attain a certain standard of education before they are permitted to engage in bread-winning occupations, and none under sixteen years should be wage-workers unless this standard has been reached.

All children, when they begin work, should be examined by a public physician, and held back from intense labor if in weight, stature, and development of muscles and nerves they are dwarfed. Physicians and nurses should be charged with the duty of seeing that school children are kept in good health.

All defective, deaf, and subnormal children, as well as the crippled, should have proper separate and special instruction.

Boards of education should provide playgrounds and vacation schools, under careful supervision, in order to prevent the evils of idleness, misdirected energy, and vicious associations.

Public libraries should extend their branch work, not only to different districts of the city, but, by means of home library agencies, into the very homes of the poor; and the easy and pleasant use of the English language should thus be promoted.

The street occupations of boys should be carefully regulated and supervised, and the employment of girls in public ways should be prohibited.

Boys under the age of sixteen years should not be permitted to labor in mines or with dangerous machinery.

If parents and other adults are in any way responsible for the delinquency of children, they should be held penally responsible.

At the same time, the curriculum of the schools should be so planned as to lead by a natural transition from the play and study of childhood to the specialized industries of maturity, by means of evening schools, technical instruction for apprentices, regulation of hours and shifts, so that youth may lay a broad foundation for the specialization of the factory and mill.

Among the methods of preventive philanthropy is that of new

<sup>11</sup> Suggested by the paper of MRS. FLORENCE KELLEY, published in this number of the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY.

applications of the principle of averaging risks or "insurance." The only nation which has thus far developed a system as comprehensive as social need and as our present social science justify is Germany; and any discussion which ignores that splendid system must be regarded as tardy and provincial. No doubt each country must construct its own system, but any legislature which neglects German experience and success falls short of the best wisdom.

Sickness being one of the chief causes of dependence, all recent improvements in hygiene and sanitary science, with their practical applications in municipalities, must be counted among the direct means of preventing pauperism. The contest with tuberculosis is a familiar and happy illustration of labors in this field.<sup>12</sup>

6. Philanthropy would still have a large and even higher mission if the commonwealth could by a stroke abolish pauperism in all its present forms. Philanthropy will never become obsolete, but will merely move up to higher levels. There will always be superior and inferior; stronger men in advance, feebler men in the rear; but all will be members of the same community, knit by economic, political, and moral ties into one organization. Already the condition of social dependents is far higher than it was a century ago. Where actual misery and depravity have been abolished — if that time ever comes — there will still be work for the most successful on behalf of those less gifted. Much of our charitable work is already on this level. In rural communities the desperate and tragical struggle with shameless pauperism is often absent; there are no "poor," none dependent on public or private relief; yet in many villages the higher charity has a very earnest mission. There are still spiritual and intellectual dwarfs to be stimulated; gossip dissipates; low vice lurks in unsuspected places; and those who lag in the rear hinder the march of the most advanced.

The philanthropic measures which have been developed in presence of pathological phenomena have reacted upon normal activities. Thus, for example, the methods of studying and train-

<sup>12</sup> Other illustrations are given by Dr. E. Münsterberg in his paper published in this number of the *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY*.

ing the feeble-minded and the juvenile offenders, and the vacation schools for summer vagrants among children, have made substantial and appreciated contributions to the science of education.

Crises in commerce and industry are felt to be pathological; but a scientific study of crises reveals the principles which should regulate ordinary business in such a way as to avoid widespread financial ruin, as rules and laws controlling the issue of currency, the straining of credit, and the fluctuations in the production of commodities.

The labors of the philanthropist awaken and sustain those social habits of thought and sympathy which elevate and ennoble family life, refine customs, and inform legislation with a universal moral aim. Mediaeval charity was full of blunders, but its failures are our warnings, and its spirit of devotion inspires us through the literary monuments of its typical heroes. In a similar way the institutions and laws which public and private charity are now constructing will shine over the waste of years a veritable pharos for the centuries to come.

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